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Statewide ballot question spending exceeds \$15 million

Over \$15 million was spent to promote the passage or defeat of six of the eight questions put before voters on the Nov. 7 state ballot, according to figures released today by the Office of Campaign and Political Finance.

The OCPF study showed a total of \$15,417,805 raised and \$15,340,199 spent on the questions, which concerned the abolition of greyhound racing, expanded health care, the use of drug asset forfeitures and three separate changes in tax law. (No committees were registered and no other financial activity was reported for two questions, which concerned legislative redistricting and prisoners' voting rights.)

Of the total spending, \$15,231,004 was spent by 16 registered ballot question committees and \$109,195 was spent independently by other organizations, such as corporations and associations.

The totals do not reflect in-kind contributions, which are things of value other than money such as staff, supplies and other materials that were provided to ballot question committees. Such contributions were reported by the ballot question committees that received them and totaled another \$823,366.

This year, the sides spending the greater amount of money prevailed in four of the six questions for which there was campaign finance activity (3, 5, 6 and 7).

The total spending in 2000 did not exceed the record aggregate of \$16.1 million that was set in 1992, when four questions were on the ballot. This year did see one mark set: the \$15.2 million spent by all committees was the highest ever, eclipsing the \$14.6 million spent in 1992. However, the 1992 total spending record still stands because of an additional \$1.6 million in

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expenditures made independently from any ballot question committee, compared to only \$109,000 in 2000.

None of the committees set an individual record in 2000, nor did those organized for any single question set a single question record.

The greatest financial activity for a single question in 2000 was reported on **Question 5**, which would have required health insurance carriers to guarantee certain rights to their patients and providers and would have also prohibited the conversion of non-profit hospitals, HMOs, and health insurers into for-profit entities until a system was created to provide comprehensive health care coverage for all Massachusetts residents. The question was defeated. Totals were \$5,431,849 raised and \$5,365,618 spent.

One committee on this question, The No on 5 Coalition, accounted for \$5,064,802 in expenditures, or 94 percent of the total spent on the question and 33 percent of all ballot question spending this year. The No on 5 Coalition posted the highest receipt and expenditure totals of any single ballot question committee in 2000, but fell far short of the \$8.2 million record for a single committee, set in 1998 on a successful question upholding deregulation of the power industry.

The aggregate spending for Question 5 is also not a single-question record, falling far short of the \$9.1 million spent on a failed 1988 question that would have banned power plants that produce nuclear waste.

The proposition with the second-highest level of activity in 2000 was **Question 4**, which cut the state income tax level from 5.95 percent to 5 percent over three years. That question was approved.

Total activity for Question 4 was \$4,850,089 raised and \$4,831,883 spent. Proponents of the cut raised and spent about \$1.36 million, while opponents raised and spent almost \$3.5 million.

The three "No" committees for Question 4 were also organized to oppose **Question 6**, which would have granted tax credits for highway tolls and excise taxes. The question was defeated. These committees' figures are therefore counted twice in a per-question breakdown, but not in the totals for all committees in the second paragraph of this study, to avoid double counting.

The total activity for Question 6 was \$3,785,467 raised and \$3,768,705 spent. The single committee organized solely for the question reported receipts of \$294,470 and expenditures of \$288,228.

Fourth in total activity was **Question 3**, which would have banned dog racing in the Commonwealth. The question was defeated. Total activity was \$2,695,095 raised and \$2,711,282 spent. The Yes side reported \$942,328 in receipts and \$937,194 in expenditures. The No side reported raising \$1,752,766 and spending \$1,751,773.

Question 8 proposed earmarking assets forfeited in drug possession and distribution cases for drug treatment. The question was defeated. Totals were \$1,678,752 raised and \$1,664,845 raised. The single committee favoring the question reported raising \$1,639,302 and spending \$1,626,629, while the opposition ballot question committee reported raising \$39,450 and spending \$38,216.

The question with the lowest level of activity was **Question 7**, which created a state income tax deduction for charitable contributions. The question was approved. Such a provision had been signed into law earlier in the year, though the question remained on the ballot. Consequently, there was relatively little campaign activity on behalf of the question. A total of \$467,550 was raised and \$454,202 was spent, all by one committee to favor passage of the question.

The total spending figures also do not include aggregate committee liabilities outstanding as of Nov. 15, which totaled \$376,483. However, liabilities are included in the charts that follow, as are in-kind contributions and independent expenditures.

The figures were based on reports filed by committees and other organizations covering the period through Nov. 15 and are subject to change due to any subsequent corrections, deletions or additions made as the result of any review conducted by OCPF or amendments filed by committees or other organizations. Ballot question committees in operation after Nov. 15 must file year-end reports with OCPF on or before Jan. 22, 2001, and must dissolve after a final vote on the question.

Reports filed by each of the committees, as well as by organizations and corporations making expenditures concerning the questions, are on file at OCPF's office in Room 411 of the McCormack State Office Building, One Ashburton Place, Boston. The ballot question committee reports are also available on OCPF's web site at www.state.ma.us/ocpf. A copy of this report is also being posted on the web site.

A breakdown of activity for each question follows.

Campaign Finance Activity for the 2000 Statewide Ballot Questions

Question 1: Constitutional Amendment Regarding Legislative Redistricting

No committees organized; no activity reported.

Question 2: Constitutional Amendment Regarding Voting Rights of Incarcerated Felons

No committees organized; no activity reported.

Question 3: Banning Dog Racing

Committee	Date of Organization	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions	Liabilities
<i>Support</i>					
Grey2K	7/8/99	916,458.11	906,385.47	18,972.80	10,000.00
National Coalition of Greyhound Advocates	11/3/00	25,870.00	22,591.86	--	16,811.20
<i>Committee total</i>		942,328.11	928,977.33	18,972.80	26,811.20
Independent expenditures			8,216.55		
<i>Total in favor</i>		942,328.11	937,193.88	18,972.80	26,811.20
 <i>Oppose</i>					
Massachusetts Animal Interest Coalition	8/21/00	1,752,766.45	1,751,772.51	233,813.44	--
<i>Committee total</i>		1,752,766.45	1,751,772.51	233,813.44	--
Independent Expenditures			22,315.34		
<i>Total opposed</i>		1,752,766.45	1,774,087.85	233,813.44	--
<i>Question 3 Total</i>		\$2,695,094.56	\$2,711,281.73	\$252,786.24	\$26,811.20

Question 4: Reduction in Income Tax Rate

Committee	Date of Organization	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions	Liabilities
<i>Support</i>					
A Promise to Keep: 5%	7/29/97	103,360.20	95,592.10	--	34,814.59
Tax Rollback Committee	8/18/99	1,255,731.50	1,253,100.89	12,747.09	398.16
Committee total		1,359,091.70	1,348,692.99	12,747.09	35,212.75
Independent expenditures/other*			19,625.00		
Total in favor		1,359,091.70	1,368,317.99	12,747.09	35,212.75
<i>Oppose</i>					
The Campaign for Massachusetts' Future#	1/14/00	3,083,945.89	3,077,509.19	55,370.19	89,948.80
Healthy Massachusetts:	10/10/00	403,320.00	375,094.43	2,287.50	250,000.00
No on 4 and 6#					
Gay and Lesbian Labor Activists Network Against 4 and 6#	10/19/00	3,731.15	3,731.15	--	1,321.15
Committee total		3,490,997.04	3,456,334.77	57,657.69	341,269.95
Independent expenditures				7,229.37	
Total opposed		3,490,997.04	3,463,564.14	57,657.69	341,269.95
Question 4 Total		\$4,850,088.74	\$4,831,882.13	\$70,404.78	\$376,482.70

* "Other" represents \$19,625.00 in administrative expenditures by a third committee organized to support Question 4, "Yes on 4, No on 5." The committee is not included elsewhere because its expenditures consisted almost solely of contributions to three other ballot question committees. Including Yes on 4, No on 5 in the other totals above would result in double-counting both contributions and expenditures. The committee reported raising and spending \$339,625. It made contributions to the Tax Rollback Committee (\$90,000), A Promise to Keep: 5% (\$15,000) and the No on 5 Committee (\$215,000).

Totals for these committees also include activity in opposition to Question 6. It is impossible to categorize each expenditure by an individual question, so totals are listed for each question.

Question 5: Health Care Access and Universal Coverage

Committee	Date of Organization	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions	Liabilities
<i>Support</i>					
Coalition for Health Care	12/22/99	88,200.00	79,968.27	181,709.80	30,113.92
Vote for Health: Yes on 5	7/28/00	131,540.12	109,286.22	11,648.00	10,000.00
Committee to Defend and Improve Health Care	1/21/00	83,894.81	83,894.81	--	--
<i>Committee total</i>		303,634.93	273,149.30	193,357.80	40,113.92
Independent expenditures			2,550.00		
<i>Total in favor</i>		303,634.93	275,699.30	193,357.80	40,113.92
 <i>Oppose</i>					
No on 5 Coalition	11/4/99	5,128,214.00	5,064,801.53	231,009.94	--
<i>Committee total</i>		5,128,214.00	5,064,801.53	231,009.94	--
Independent Expenditures/other*			25,116.71		
<i>Total opposed</i>		5,128,214.00	5,089,918.24	231,009.94	--
<i>Question 5 Total</i>		\$5,431,848.93	\$5,365,617.54	\$424,367.74	\$40,113.92

* "Other" represents \$19,625.00 in administrative expenditures by a second committee organized to oppose Question 5, "Yes on 4, No on 5." The committee is not included elsewhere because its expenditures consisted almost solely of contributions to three other ballot question committees. Including Yes on 4, No on 5 in the other totals above would result in double-counting both contributions and expenditures. The committee reported raising and spending \$339,625. It made contributions to the Tax Rollback Committee (\$90,000), A Promise to Keep: 5% (\$15,000) and the No on 5 Committee (\$215,000).

Question 6: Tax Deduction for Tolls and Excise Taxes

Committee	Date of Organization	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions	Liabilities
<i>Support</i>					
Commuter Tax Relief Coalition	8/24/99	294,470.00	288,227.91	--	--
<i>Committee total</i>		294,470.00	288,227.91	--	--
Independent expenditures			--		
<i>Total in favor</i>		294,470.00	288,227.91	--	--
<i>Oppose</i>					
The Campaign for Massachusetts' Future#	1/14/00	3,083,945.89	3,077,509.19	55,370.19	89,948.80
Healthy Massachusetts: No on 4 and 6#	10/10/00	403,320.00	375,094.43	2,287.50	250,000.00
Gay and Lesbian Labor Activists Network Against 4 and 6#	10/19/00	3,731.15	3,731.15	--	1,321.15
<i>Committee total</i>		3,490,997.04	3,456,334.77	57,657.69	341,269.95
Independent expenditures			24,142.38		
<i>Total opposed</i>		3,490,997.04	3,480,477.15	57,657.69	341,269.95
<i>Question 6 Total</i>		\$3,785,467.04	\$3,768,705.06	\$57,657.69	\$341,269.95

Totals for these committees also include activity in opposition to Question 4. It is impossible to categorize each expenditure by an individual question, so totals are listed for each question.

Question 7: Income Tax Deduction for Charitable Giving

Committee	Date of Organization	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions	Liabilities
<i>Support</i>					
Committee to Encourage Charitable Giving	9/16/99	467,550.00	454,202.26	16,569.98	67,664.31
<i>Committee total</i>		<i>467,550.00</i>	<i>454,202.26</i>	<i>16,569.98</i>	<i>67,664.31</i>
Independent expenditures			--		
<i>Total in favor</i>	<i>467,550.00</i>	<i>454,202.26</i>	<i>16,569.98</i>		<i>67,664.31</i>
<i>Total opposed</i>		--	--	--	--
<i>Question 7 Total</i>	<i>\$467,550.00</i>	<i>\$454,202.26</i>	<i>\$16,569.98</i>		<i>\$67,664.31</i>

Question 8: Use of Drug Forfeiture Assets for Increased Treatment

Committee	Date of Organization	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions	Liabilities
<i>Support</i>					
Yes on 8: The Coalition for Fair Treatment	9/22/99	1,639,302.38	1,626,629.15	59,236.84	--
<i>Committee total</i>		1,639,302.38	1,626,629.15	59,236.84	--
Independent expenditures			--		
<i>Total in favor</i>		1,639,302.38	1,626,629.15	59,236.84	--
 <i>Oppose</i>					
No on Question 8 Committee	11/1/00	39,450.00	38,216.35	--	--
<i>Committee total</i>		39,450.00	38,216.35	--	--
Independent expenditures			--		
<i>Total opposed</i>		39,450.00	38,216.35	--	--
<i>Question 8 Total</i>		\$1,678,752.38	\$1,664,845.50	\$59,236.84	--

Total Activity by Question

<i>Question</i>	<i>Receipts</i>	<i>Expenditures</i>	<i>In-Kind Contributions</i>	<i>Ending Liabilities</i>
3: Dog Racing	\$2,695,094.56	\$2,711,281.73	\$252,786.24	\$ 26,811.20
4: Income Tax	4,850,088.74	4,831,882.13	70,404.78	376,482.70
5: Health Care	5,431,848.93	5,365,617.54	424,367.74	40,113.92
6: Tolls/Excise Tax	3,785,467.04	3,768,705.06	57,657.69	341,269.95
7: Charitable deductions	467,550.00	454,202.26	16,569.98	57,664.31
8: Drug Treatment	1,678,752.38	1,664,845.50	59,236.84	--

Totals for all committees (*adjusted**)

<i>Raised</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>In-Kind Contributions</i>	<i>Ending Liabilities</i>
\$15,417,804.61	\$15,340,199.45	\$823,365.58	\$376,482.70

* Totals do not correspond to the sum of the committee-by-committee tally above. Totals were adjusted to prevent double counting of the three committees with activity on both Questions 4 and 6.

